

## **GRADE 8: PARTICIPATING IN CHANGE**

### **Considerations for Curriculum Development**

#### **Eighth Grade Contextual Theme: Early American Studies**

*The United States – 1754-1877.*

#### **Assumptions and Goals of Curriculum Development**

The focus of grade 8 will build on student's prior knowledge of ancient civilizations to build a better understanding of the development of the United States. Students will focus on the time period between 1754 and 1877, while applying the disciplinary core concepts of civic mindedness, economic decision making, geographical reasoning along with historical thinking through multiple perspectives and viewpoints. Through experiences linking Kentucky, the United States and the world, students will gain a sense of deeper global connections. Additionally, students will continue to build critical thinking skills around important issues in the past and apply them to current events. Throughout grade 8, students should continue to be afforded ample opportunities to engage in all Practices of the Inquiry Cycle.

**Summative grade level compelling questions may include, but are not limited to, the following:**

What makes the United States unique?

How would your life be different if you were an early American settler?

How did geography impact the development and culture of the United States?

Would you have migrated to Colonial America?

#### **Contextual Inquiries by Disciplinary Core Concept**

##### **Civic Mindedness**

How did the Age of Exploration lead to new political systems?

How did British Imperialism affect attitudes?

How did political philosophers, such as John Locke, influence early American opinion and documents?

What was the role of compromise in the development of government?

How did the first United States government operate?

What are some of the rights and responsibilities of United States citizens?

What are the purposes of the U.S. government?

Does the United States government preserve and protect the rights of its people?

How is the Constitution a living document?

How is power shared among the three branches of government?

What is the role of federalism in the United States?  
How did significant United States documents establish democratic principles?  
Why do United States citizens need to assume certain duties and responsibilities?

### **Economic Decision Making**

How did the Age of Exploration lead to new economic systems?  
How did economic problems lead to a movement toward independence?  
How did new technological changes influence the economy?  
How did the economy impact sectionalism?  
Is war worth its costs?  
How was scarcity a factor in determining how the government and individuals made decisions about the use of resources?  
What was the role of profit, competition and specialization in early America?  
What goods and services were produced, consumed and distributed in early America?

### **Geographical Reasoning**

What are the physical characteristics of the United States?  
Where are the major cities, mountain ranges, rivers and lakes of the United States?  
Where were the colonies located?  
What geographic factors influenced exploration?  
How and why did the early American settlements differ?  
How were early American regions made distinct by human characteristics?  
What were the migration and immigration patterns of early Americans?  
How did colonists modify and adapt to the physical environment?

### **Historical Thinking**

What were the significant wars of this time period and the factors surrounding them?  
Why was there conflict between the Europeans and the Native Americans?  
How did the colonies change over time?  
How have the events of exploration and colonization been interpreted throughout history?  
Was the American Revolution a revolution for all?  
How have the principles of the Declaration of Independence and Constitution affected society?  
How were various American leaders and political figures viewed by different people?  
What are significant documents or artifacts of this time period?  
How did America's diverse society develop?  
How did the growth of democracy occur over time?

## **Civic Mindedness**

**8.CM.1 Civic and Political Institutions** *Evaluate and demonstrate the roles of citizens at various levels in the U.S. political system.*

**8.CM.2 Participation and Deliberation: Applying Civic Virtues and Democratic Principles** *Analyze founding documents to explain how democratic principles influence government, society and communities.*

**8.CM.3 Processes, Rules and Laws** *Analyze the purposes, implementation and consequences of bills, laws and policies to address societal needs.*

**Key Idea:** The democratic principles established in the founding documents address societal needs.

**Students, who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following Compelling Questions:**

How do citizens interact with their government?

How have democratic principles influenced the development of the United States?

Why do we have bills, laws and policies?

**Students, who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following Supporting Questions:**

What are the roles of U.S. citizens?

What are the founding documents of the U.S. political system?

What are bills, laws and policies?

**Fundamental Understandings:**

*Students will understand the following:*

- In order for the United States government to function as a democracy, citizens must participate.
- Democracy may change, but it is always based on principles that help citizens to strengthen it.
- Public policy is a way to deal with a problem or correct an issue in the United States.

**Key Concepts:**

*May include, but are not limited to the following:* bills, branches of government, citizenship, civic dispositions, civic participation, democratic principles, federalism, forms of government, founding documents, laws, public policy, responsibilities, rights, roles of citizens, rules, sources of power in government, structure of the U.S. Constitution, etc.

## **Economic Decision Making**

**8.EDM.4 Economic Decision Making** *Use economic analysis to construct alternative approaches to solve various economic problems.*

**8.EDM.5 Exchange and Markets** *Use economic analysis to evaluate the ways in which incentive, competition and the consequences of competition influence buyers and sellers in markets.*

**8.EDM.6 National Economy** *Use economic analysis to evaluate data in order to explain the influence of monetary changes on spending, production and supply of money in the national economy.*

**8.EDM.7 Global Economy** *Use economic analysis to illustrate how barriers of trade and the benefits and costs of trade policies affect individuals, businesses and society.*

**Key Idea:** A nation's economic policy impacts individuals, nations and the world.

**Students, who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following Compelling Questions:**

How is national economic policy determined?  
How do competitive markets function?  
How does monetary policy affect the U.S. economy?  
Why do governments impose trade barriers?

**Students, who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following Supporting Questions:**

What are examples of economic problems?  
What is the role of competition?  
What national factors impact the supply of money?  
What are trade policies?

**Fundamental Understandings:**

*Students will understand the following:*

- Economic analysis is integrated into the decision making process.
- Competition serves as a motivating factor in economic markets.
- The effects of national monetary policy can be far reaching.
- Trade barriers obstruct free trade and decrease overall economic efficiency.

**Key Concepts:**

*May include, but not limited to the following:* alternative approaches, banks, budget, buyers, competition, consumption, credit, debt, distribution, economic analysis, economic decision making, economic problems, economic systems, Federal Reserve, fiscal policy, global economy, goods and services, incentives, interest, markets, monetary change, monetary policy, national economy, opportunity cost, prices, production, resources, scarcity, sellers supply of money, trade barriers, trade policies, etc.

## **Geographical Reasoning**

**8.GR.8 Spatial Views of the World** *Create various geographical representations in order to analyze how patterns of settlement arise, how people make changes to the land and how cultures develop in response to surroundings.*

**8.GR.9 Human-Environment Interaction** *Explain how cultural patterns and economic decisions influence environments and daily lives of people in both nearby and distant places.*

**8.GR.10 Human Populations Spatial Patterns and Movements** *Evaluate the influences of long-term human-induced environmental changes on spatial patterns.*

**8.GR.11 Global Interconnections** *Explain how environmental characteristics and production of goods influence spatial patterns of world trade.*

**Key Idea:** Geography continues to impact human decision making.

**Students, who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following Compelling Questions:**

How does geography promote and limit human activity?  
How does geography impact culture?  
How do environmental changes affect population distribution?  
Why are economic activities located in certain areas?

**Students, who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following Supporting Questions:**

What factors impact settlement?  
What is the relationship between the daily lives of people and their environment?  
What are long-term human-induced environmental changes?  
What are spatial patterns of world trade?  
Where are economic activities located?

**Fundamental Understandings:**

*Students will understand the following:*

- Some locations are better suited for settlement than others.
- The physical environment can both accommodate and be endangered by human activities.
- Human-induced changes influence where people live.
- Producers choose locations that maximize their profits.

**Key Concepts:**

*May include, but not limited to the following:* activities, adaptations, cultural characteristics, economic geography, environmental characteristics, geographical representations, human-made disasters, immigration, land use, locations, migration, modifications, natural disasters, places, regions, resources, settlements, spatial patterns, technology, trade, etc.

## **Historical Thinking**

**8.HT.12 Chronological Reasoning: Causation and Continuity** *Explain multiple causes and effects of developments, events and historical periods and evaluate the relative influence of various causes on these events.*

**8.HT.13 Historical Understanding: Contextualization and Perspectives** *Analyze how people's perspectives and multiple factors influenced what information the creators of historical documents included, and explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.*

**8.HT.14 Historical Arguments** *Organize applicable evidence from historical sources into a coherent argument including the examination of any opposing claim.*

**8.HT.15 Interpretation and Synthesis** *Evaluate the relevancy and usefulness of a historical source by examining and detecting possible limitations based on evidence collected from different kinds of historical sources.*

**Key Idea:** People's perspectives influence what we know about historical events, but can also limit the usefulness of this information.

**Students, who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following Compelling Questions:**

Is there always a direct cause for the occurrence of an event?

How do we really know what happened in history?

How do we synthesize evidence to construct historical arguments?

How do we know what historical information is useful?

**Students, who demonstrate understanding of these standards, can address the following Supporting Questions:**

How do you determine the correlation among historical causes and effects?

What is bias?

How do you evaluate arguments?

What are possible limitations of a source?

**Fundamental Understandings:**

*Students will understand the following:*

- Relationships exist among multiple historical causes and effects.
- Multiple and differing perspectives affect the recording of any given historical phenomenon.
- Convincing historical arguments require the evaluation of evidence.
- When considering evidence, we must evaluate a source's limitations.

**Key Concepts:**

*May include, but not limited to the following:* argument, bias, cause and effect, change over time, chronology, claims, contextualizing, corroboration, developments, events, evidence, fact, historical documents, historical periods, limitations of sources, motivations, opinion, perspectives, relationships, relevance, sourcing, etc.